

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

In complete response to the Office Action dated August 6, 2004, on the above-identified application, reconsideration is respectfully requested. Claims 11 – 29 are pending in this application. With this amendment, claims 11 and 20 have been amended. Claims 12 and 14 have been cancelled.

Allowable Subject Matter:

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for allowing claims 28 -29, and for stating that claims 12-17 would be allowable if they were not dependent upon a rejected base claim.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102:

Claims 11, 18-20, and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). The Applicant respectfully contends that due to the aforementioned claim amendments, the rejection is now moot. For this reason, the Applicant respectfully asserts that this basis for rejection deserves reconsideration.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103:

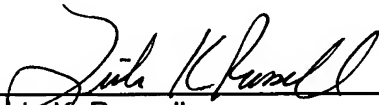
Claims 21, 22, and 24-27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nemchinsky in view of Steiger et al. The Applicant respectfully contends that due to the aforementioned claim amendments, the rejection is now moot. For this reason, the Applicant respectfully asserts that this basis for rejection deserves reconsideration.

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Amdt. dated January 4, 2005
Reply to Office Action of August 6, 2004

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, it is believed that the present application now stands in condition for allowance. Early notice to this effect is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner believe a telephone call would expedite prosecution of the application, he is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: January 4, 2005

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING UNDER 37 CFR 1.8(a)

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on this 4th day of January, 2005.



Diana Guzman